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THE BIBLICAL WORLD

CONTINUING

The Old and New Testament Student

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NUMBER I

THE THREE JOURNALS

THERE are now three sisters—THE BIBLICAL WORLD, THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF SEMITIC LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES, and THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY—two older sisters, and a sister just born. The youngest member in the family often takes at birth the most important position. Perhaps this will be true of the JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY. THE BIBLICAL WORLD (born under the name, *The Hebrew Student*) is nearly fifteen years old. Very early in its history it was found necessary to make a sharp distinction between historical and theological articles, and articles of a linguistic and exegetical nature involving the use of Greek and Hebrew type. For the publication of the latter, *Hebraica* (now THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF SEMITIC LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES) was instituted. But the time has come when another distinction must be made, namely, that which exists between (1) articles of a popular character for the information of those whose interest has been quickened in Bible study and who desire to know the latest results of biblical investigation, and (2) articles of a more technical nature, furnishing contributions toward the settlement of the more important problems in the various fields of theological science. The new theological journal is ushered into existence under auspices particularly happy. The unanimity of sentiment with respect to the need of such a journal is no greater than the unanimity of consent on the part of the theological workers of our own and other countries

to unite in establishing it. Its publication will permit the editors of THE BIBLICAL WORLD to go even further than they have gone in making the pages of the latter journal brighter and more attractive. Articles which, perhaps, deserve the title "heavy" will henceforth find their place in THE JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY. The special subscription price for THE JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY to subscribers of THE BIBLICAL WORLD will make it possible for those who so desire, to have both journals. If THE JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY shall be accorded the same courteous treatment at the hands of the public which has been given to its older sisters, the editors will be satisfied.

First question: Does the Bible deserve to be studied as thoroughly as, for example, English history or English literature; and if a student in college should take time for such study and perform it satisfactorily, should he not receive credit for the same?

Second question: Is it not legitimate from the point of view of Sunday observance, to use a portion of the day for study of the Bible, and is it not as legitimate to perform such study thoroughly and with a view to permanent results, as to perform it superficially and without expectation of accomplishing anything?

Third question: Would it not be a good plan for the officers of instruction in our many Christian institutions to offer courses of Bible study to be given Sunday morning by competent instructors and to count as a part of the regular prescribed curriculum? Would this be an experiment? Perhaps so. But would it not be a legitimate experiment? It is at all events an experiment which The University of Chicago will try. Beginning with the first Sunday in January, two courses of university study will be offered to students of The University, one upon the subject "Prophecy and the History of Prophecy," and one upon the subject "The Life of Christ." Nearly one hundred students have registered for each of these courses. The student, if he attends the exercise regularly and performs the work to the satisfaction of the instructor, will be given credit for the work in the same proportion as for any other work offered in The University. The

hours of instruction are at 8:30 and 9:30 in the morning in order that they may not interfere with church services. It is distinctly announced that the work required in preparation will be severe in character, including written exercises. Someone, of course, will suggest that this is an infringement upon the sacredness of Sunday. It need only be said in reply, such infringement should be encouraged, at least until our college students have been given a knowledge of the simplest facts of biblical history and biblical literature, a knowledge which nine-tenths of them lack, and until our Christian institutions have come to realize that they were founded to teach this very Bible, which at present occupies so small a place in the curriculum. It might be possible for such work to be conducted with no more of a religious spirit and with no more spiritual profit than a course in trigonometry, but such is not the purpose of the courses proposed. The work is undertaken with the single thought in mind, to enable the students to know God in his dealings with man as illustrated in the history of the chosen people and in the peculiar events connected with the life and times of Jesus Christ. Is it not an experiment worth trying?

Is there anything more difficult than to provide a religious service for the members of a university? These members, it will be remembered, include (1) instructors engaged in the study of problems in all the more important fields of knowledge, problems which are largely theoretical; (2) students whose whole thought is self-improvement and whose attitude of mind is being largely modified by their contact with problems hitherto unappreciated. They are men and women whose time is wholly occupied in thinking, and thinking, at least for the time being, introduces doubt and skepticism. Ordinarily, it is suggested, such a body needs the simplest gospel. No one will doubt the truth of this suggestion, but the question is, in what manner may the simple gospel be best presented. Only one preacher in a hundred can preach acceptably to a university audience, because the chief ambition of ninety-nine preachers out of a hundred in the present

generation is to utter something which will attract the ignorant and untrained mind, rather than to preach truth which will cultivate and edify the trained mind. But when all this has been said the difficulty still remains. University authorities throughout the country recognize this difficulty as, in many respects, the most serious connected with university administration. Two facts seem to enter into the solution of the problem: (1) that which has just been cited, the importance of presenting the gospel, (2) the importance of presenting it in a way which will attract those who are able and willing to think. The gospel may be presented and nothing accomplished. What is needed is the presentation of the gospel and the stimulation of thought. An effort to accomplish these two things will be made at The University of Chicago during the Winter Quarter. On Sunday afternoons at 4 o'clock, twelve addresses of forty-five minutes will be given on successive Sundays upon the subject, "The idea of life after death and its influence upon conduct and character." The outline of the course is as follows:

(1) A general address based upon the proposition that thought influences life and character, with illustrations of the proposition, by Professor Albion W. Small. (2) How conduct and character were influenced among primitive men by their conception of the future life, by Professor William I. Thomas. (3) What the Egyptians believed about life after death and how they were affected by the belief, by Dr. James H. Breasted. (4) The ideas of the Assyrians and Babylonians concerning the future life and its effect upon their life and character, by Professor E. T. Harper, Chicago Theological Seminary. (5) The ideas of the Indians and Persians concerning the future life and the effect upon their life and character, by Professor George S. Goodspeed. (6) The ideas of the Greeks and Romans concerning the future life and the effect upon their life and character, by Professor Paul Shorey. (7) The ideas of the Mohammedans concerning the future life, etc., by Rabbi Emil G. Hirsch. (8) The ideas of the Hebrews as found in the Old Testament concerning the future life, etc., by Professor William

R. Harper. (9) The idea of the future life as presented in the New Testament, by Professor E. D. Burton. In each of these historical studies the question will be asked and answered, so far as may be possible, how the holding of such and such an opinion concerning the future life affected the conduct and character of the people. (10) The idea of the future life as it presents itself in modern literature, by Dr. Frank W. Gunsaulus. (11) The question of the future life from the point of view of modern science, by Professor Thomas C. Chamberlin. (12) The question of the future life from the point of view of modern philosophy, by Professor McKenzie, Chicago Theological Seminary. May the simplest gospel be presented in these addresses? Surely the death of Jesus Christ and his resurrection is the most fundamental factor constituting the gospel, and just as surely every speaker who discusses the question must bring himself and his auditors face to face with this great fact of history. Will the consideration of such themes lead men to think? Surely such a series of historical studies will bring men face to face with the best and truest conceptions of past history, and just as surely those who listen will be compelled to think, not only because other men have thought, but because of their own personal interest in the question. Another experiment? No. It is nothing new to plan for a series of addresses which will represent truth and compel thinking men to think.

It was an event of no ordinary significance—the first annual meeting of the Council of Seventy. Meetings of investigators are not uncommon and especially of biblical investigators. But this meeting was made up of teachers,—men whose whole lives had been consecrated to the teaching of the Bible in one form or another; and the question asked again and again was not, What does this passage mean, and how may this question be answered, but rather, How may this truth be conveyed to the minds of those who stand in need of it? The round-table discussion on Bible study in college was, we venture to say, one of the best ever conducted upon that subject. The experiences of many teachers in many

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institutions were related. The suggestion dwelt upon that the literary study of the Bible was after all not the study of its external form, but rather of its very essence, was timely and greatly needed. What is literature? The utterance of the soul. And what is biblical literature? The divine utterance through the human soul, a soul illuminated by the conception of God which has been granted it.

A new light was shed upon that oft discussed question as to the use of the Revised Version, and more clearly than ever before did it seem to some of us that the man who today uses other than the Revised Version is criminally guilty of concealing light which God in his providence has shed upon his own revelation. And then there were discussed the difficulties of the Bible teacher of today, how many and how peculiar; the best books, for a pastor's library and the Sunday-school library, bearing upon the interpretation of the Bible; the best order in which the great subjects of Bible study might most satisfactorily be considered. These and other important questions for the Bible teacher were considered long and thoughtfully. The meeting face to face of men who had known each other by name and had not met; and the communion of soul with soul, and of soul with God in prayer—these, and many other benefits, were the privilege of those who attended this important meeting. The Council of Seventy has taken upon itself a most responsible work. It is composed, however, of men who have the courage and the strength to face difficulties however great. May the work which they have taken under their care be prospered in the future as in the past, and may tens of thousands through the influence of this work be added to the numbers of those who have been guided into a living conception of sacred truth.